

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are pending in the application. Claims 1-21 stand rejected by the Examiner.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings which were filed with the application. Specifically, the Examiner has objected to a lack of brief descriptive labels for the numbered boxes. In the attached drawing correction, Applicant has numbered the voice-equipped routers, the PBX interface (I/F), the PBX conditions (COND) and the local telephony switching systems. However, the trunk connections 16a-c are not numbered boxes, but line connections, and therefore providing descriptive labels would seem to make the drawings harder to read, rather than more clear. Therefore, Applicant has not labeled the trunk connections. Applicant submits that these amendments to the drawings have overcome the objection to the drawings and requests withdrawal of this objection.

Claims 3, 6, 7 and 19 are objected to for informalities which have been corrected. Corresponding amendments to the specification, expanding the acronyms already present in the specification, have also been made. Applicant submits that these amendments overcome the objection to the claims and requests withdrawal of this objection.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. Specifically, the use of the terms 'said first' and 'said second' did not have clear antecedent basis in the claim. Applicant has eliminated the use of the term 'said' and submits that this overcomes the rejection to the claim and requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 1-2, 4-6, 9-18 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Staples et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,889,845). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Staples is directed to a system in which a remote user (a telecommuter and or a 'road warrior') is given a virtual presence by routing all data and voice telephony traffic through a

PBX or a 'virtual presence server' at the corporate office. In the invention as claimed in claims 1, 10, 14 and 18, however, Applicant's invention requires that the remote user or computer can place local telephone calls outside the PBX. This is supported in Applicant's specification on pages 3 and 4.

The text referenced in Staples mentions the use of a PSTN connection, but that is only in the context of connecting the remote phone with the virtual presence server. There is no capability of the remote phone using the PSTN connection to dial local calls direction, outside the virtual presence server. Indeed, even calls directed to the user's home phone are directed to the virtual presence server. See Staples at col. 6, lines 31-36, col. 3, lines 55-67.

Applicant therefore submits that claims 1, 10, 14 and 18 are patentably distinguishable over the prior art and requests allowance of these claims.

Claims 2, 4-6 and 7-9 depend from claim 1 and should be ruled allowable for that reason and for their own merits. Claims 11-13 depend from claim 10 and should be ruled allowable for that reason and for their own merits. Claims 15-17 depend from claim 14 and should be ruled allowable for that reason and for their own merits. Claims 20-21 depend from claim 18 and should be ruled allowable for that reason and for their own merits.

Claims 8 is rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Staples et al in view of Astarabadi (U.S. Patent No. 5,822,405).

As discussed above, Staples does not disclose a signal to a PBX indicating a phone is off the hook, allowing the phone to route a telephone call outside the PBX, and then indicating to the PBX that the phone is back on the hook. The combination of references does not teach that during the time the telephone call is being routed outside the PBX, that incoming calls would be directed to voice mail, as is required by claim 8. Applicant therefore submits that claim 8 is patentably distinguishable over the prior art and requests allowance of this claim.

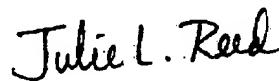
Claims 3, 7 and 19 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Staples et al in view of Foodeei et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,445,696).

As discussed above, Staples does not disclose all of the elements of the base claims 1 and 18, from which claims 3, 7 and 19 depend. Staples does not show, teach nor suggest routing telephone calls outside a PBX, much less that the signaling that inform the PBX that the phone is off-hook, thereby enabling the placing of outside the PBX calls, is either Frame Relay or Voice over ATM AAL2. Applicant therefore submits that claims 3, 7, and 19 are patentably distinguishable over the prior art and requests allowance of these claims.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon has been reviewed and is not considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. No new matter has been added by this amendment. Allowance of all claims is requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (503) 222-3613 if it appears that an interview would be helpful in advancing the case.

Respectfully submitted,

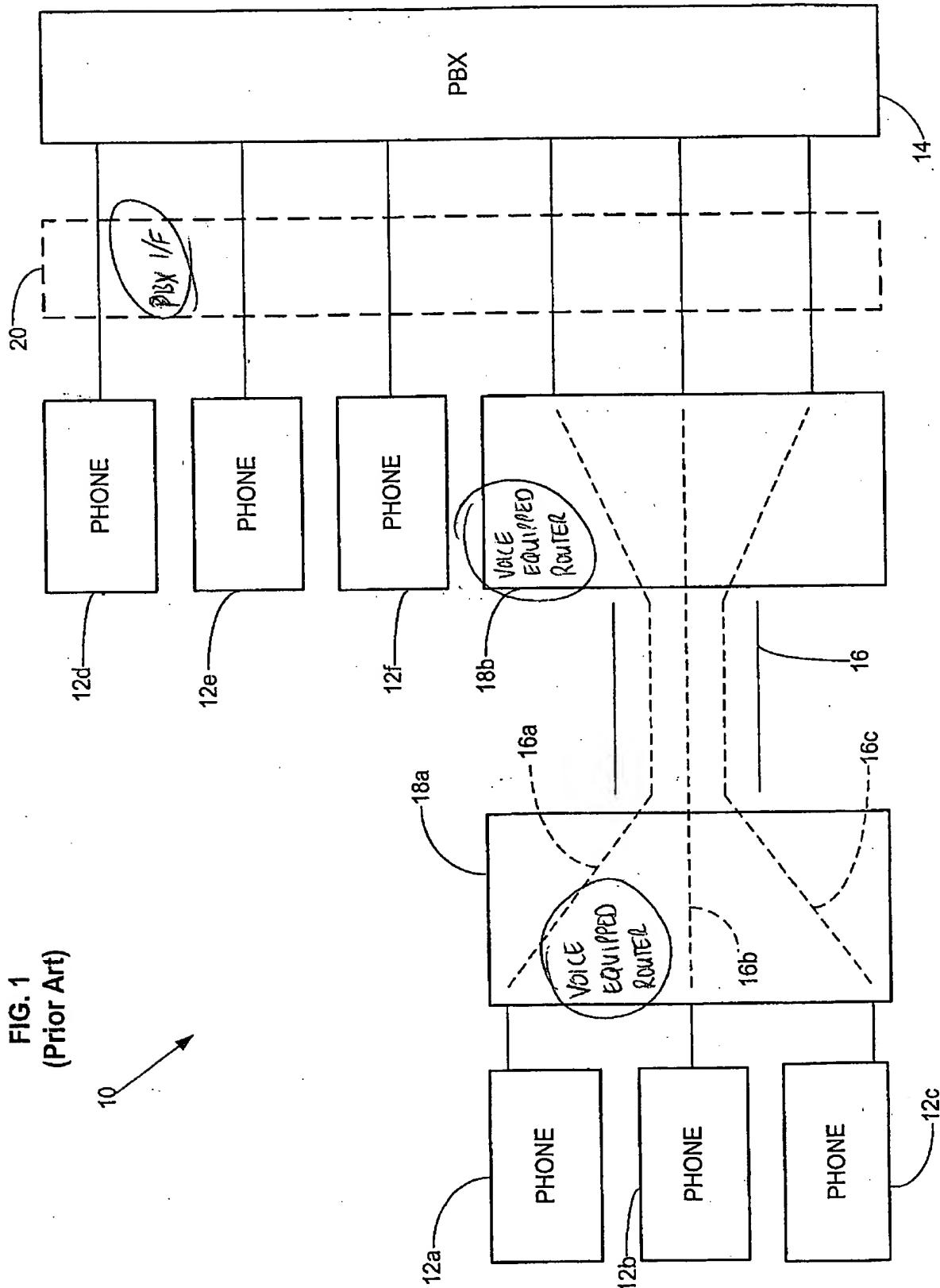
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ANNOTATED

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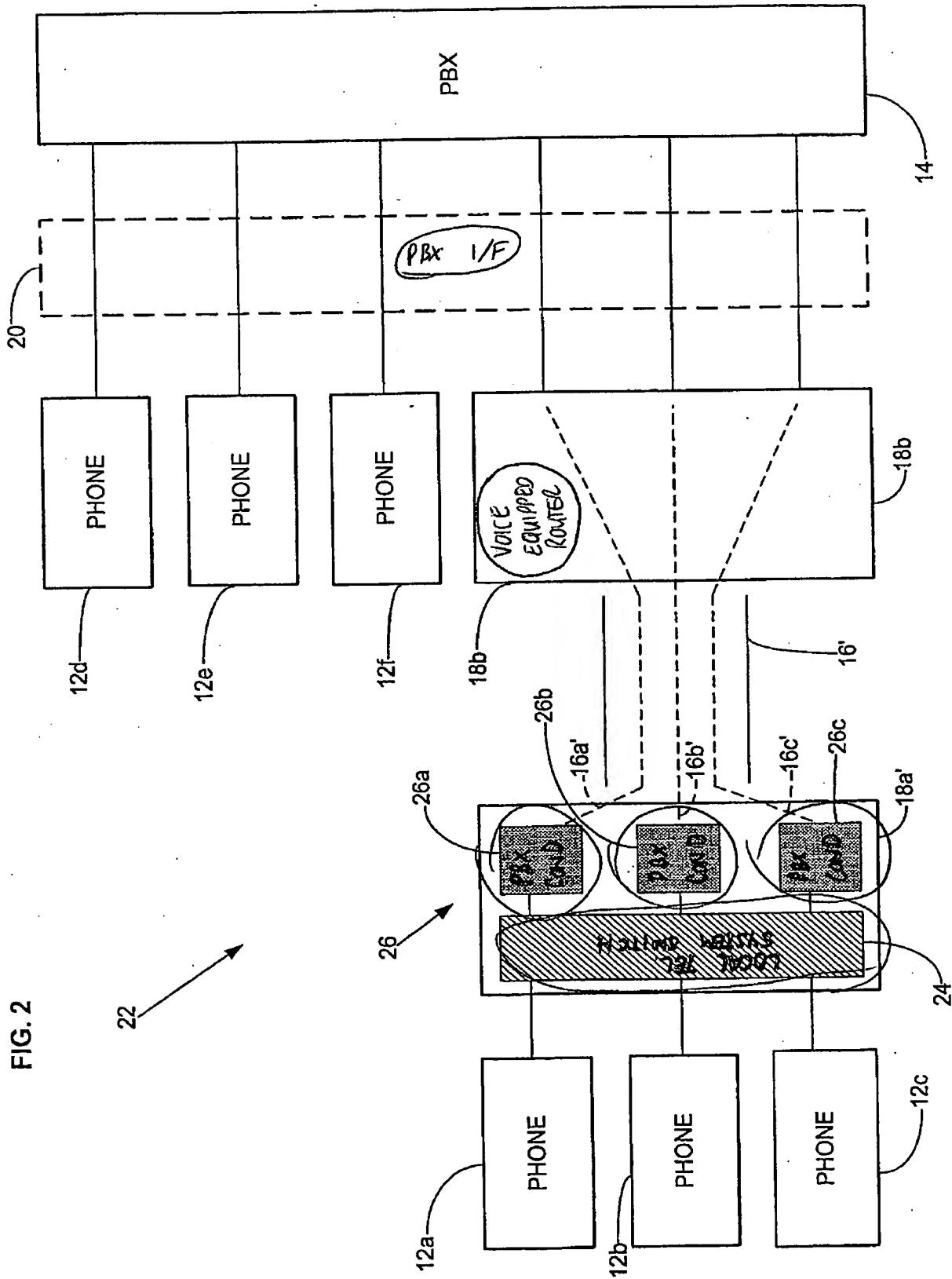
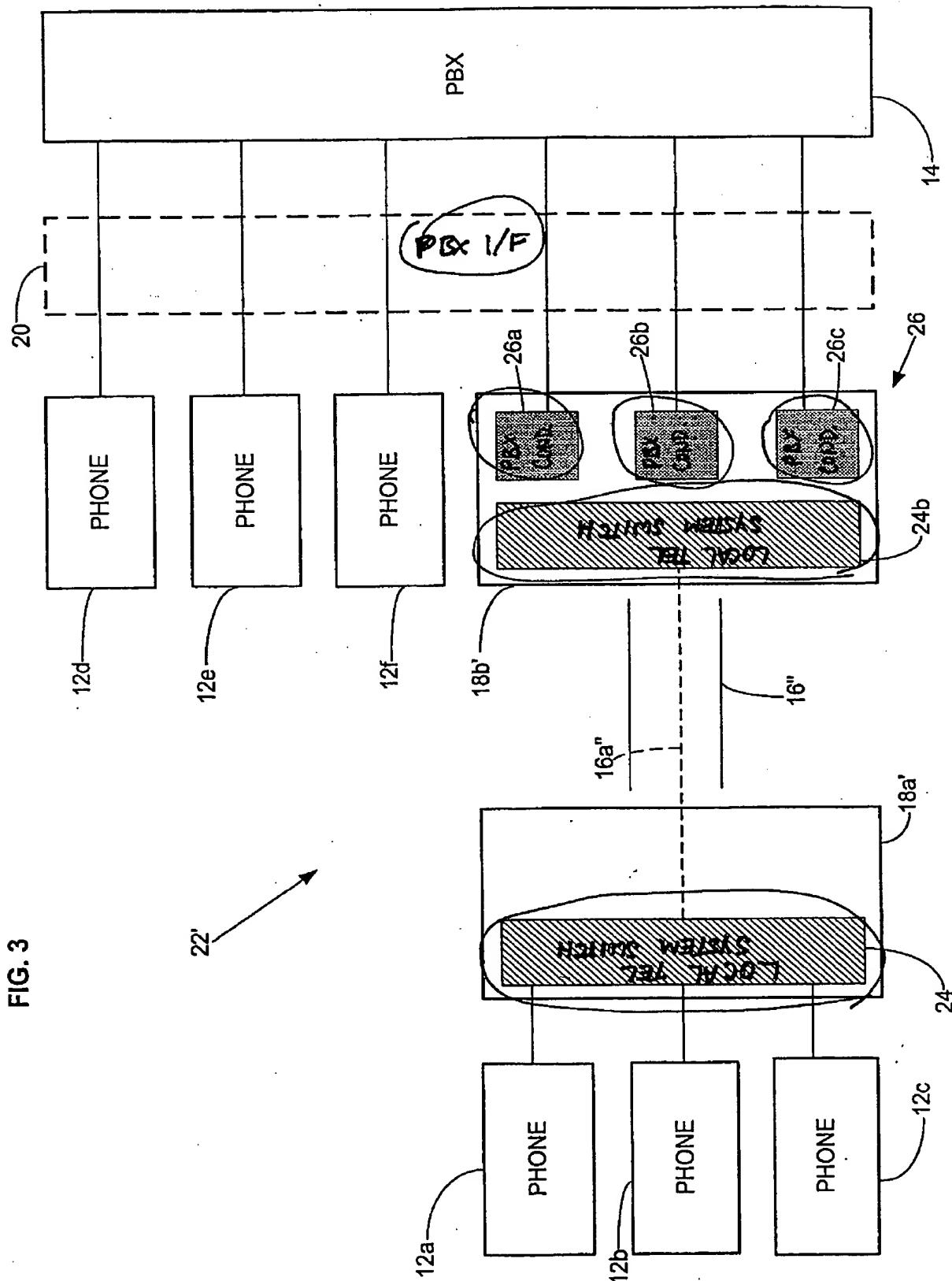


FIG. 2

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